

2, Charter Square,

Feb. 18th, 1861

My dear Mr. Will

It was a great pleasure to
me to see your handwriting - so
familiar it will always look to
me - once again. I was sorry to
miss you at Oxford, though for
my own part a lecture has so
few attractions for me that I
am always a little surprised to
find anybody present at mine.
This comes, in me, from a
peculiar~~ity~~ dulness in learning
orally - that which I listen
to quite languidly and
inattentively if I hear it

Ed.

spoken, I often read with great interest when I get it under my eyes in peace and quiet.

I was in great hopes you would like the lectures and agree with their doctrine. The doctrine is, after all, the chief matter in them - the merit of the hexameter is a secondary matter. On this I am by no means disposed to insist - and the lines are certainly not so skilfully framed as I should try to make the hexameter if I set to work to use it on a large scale. I don't however think that much can be done with Clough.

hexameters - the freshness and
vigor of the poem helps off a
great deal of their jogginess
and roughness, but there last
are very great and very
disagreeable, as I think. Though
himself thinks his measure would
not at all do for Homer, and
is laboring to make a better. He
is thinking of a translation of
the Iliad (I am not) and he
has done a good deal of it
here and there - but I think
he is cumbering himself with
mechanical rules of making
his lines scan quantitatively
instead of by accent, which
will take the naturalness

out of his work. Kingsley &
Andromeda I dutifully so much
for the fond that I did not
enough regard the forme - but
this last I believe is worth more
attention than I gave to it - Hawthorne
praises it very much. The poem
in itself seems to me a regular
specimen of the false antique.

I don't mean to publish any
more poetry till I am past 40 -
and I still want two more
years of that time. I go on
doing what I can but it is
a hard life for us all, and
it is only while we are strongly
exerting ourselves that we lose
the sense of its hardness.

kindest remembrances to your
wife - your ever affectionate M. Howe